

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-6, 12-14, 22, 23, and 26-33 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 28 and 30 are amended and claims 31-33 are added. No new matter is added by these amendments. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request that, because this application has been pending for more than five years and has received more than three Office Actions, this application should be considered "special" and a Supervisory Patent Examiner should review this application in order to more promptly and efficiently advance the prosecution. (See MPEP §707.02).

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Patterson in the June 12, 2009 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Claims 1, 22, 26, 28 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 5,228,186 to Brettell et al. (hereinafter "Brettell"); claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Brettell; and claims 3-6, 12-14, 23, 27 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Brettell in view of JP-A-6-246777 to Suzuki et al. (hereinafter "Suzuki"). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 and similarly independent claims 3, 28 and 30 call for a sheet-shaped insert having an upper edge and a lower edge that define the length of the insert, and the upper edge is below the upper opening of the cylindrical molded body.

As discussed with Examiner Patterson at the personal interview, Brettell discloses an electro-fusion pipe coupler with an outer shell 1 that is made from extruded plastic pipe. (See Brettell's column 5, lines 7-33). The Office Action on page 2 equates Brettell's shell 1 to the sheet shaped insert of independent claims 1, 3, 28 and 30 and asserts that Brettell's groove 6 defines an upper edge of the shell 1. However, it is disclosed in Brettell that the shell 1 and

layer 3 extend from end-to-end of one another. Therefore, Brettell's groove 6 is not the upper edge of the shell 1 that is used to define the length of the shell 1 because the shell 1 actually extends beyond the groove 6 and is formed end-to-end with layer 3 (i.e., full length of alleged insert). Thus, Brettell fails to disclose a sheet shaped insert with an upper edge that is below the upper opening of the cylindrical molded body, as defined in independent claim 1.

Furthermore, as discussed during the personal interview, Brettell also fails to suggest the above-mentioned features because Brettell's shell 1 acts as the outside mold, and therefore the shell 1 needs to extend from end-to-end of the layer 3 in order for the cylindrical molded body comprising layer 3 to be formed appropriately. Thus if Brettell's shell 1 had an upper edge that is below the upper opening of the intervening layer 3, the shell 1 would no longer constitute an outer mold part that delimits the mold cavity, and the molding material would simply pour out over the outside surface of the shell 1.

Suzuki fails to overcome the deficiencies of Brettell with regard to the above-mentioned features.

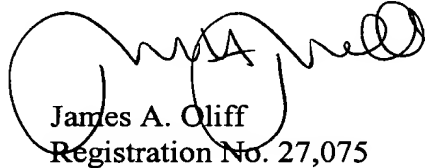
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

In addition, with regard to new claims 31-33, as discussed during the personal interview, Brettell's six radial runners 30 are not tapered-like thinned and proceed downward at an angle. Thus, dependent claims 31-33 are allowable for at least their own unique features.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:RHR/nlp

Attachments:

Request for Continued Examination  
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: August 12, 2009

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